

Message Text

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ORIGIN USIA-15

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R 172051Z DEC 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

1. USIA DIRECTOR KEOGH GAVE INTERVIEW DECEMBER 14 TO TASS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF VLADIMIR VASHEDCHENKO.

2. VASHEDCHENKO TOLD DIRECTOR THAT HE WAS PREPARING SEVERAL ARTICLES ON "USG INFORMATION SERVICES" SIMILAR TO PIECE WHICH RECENTLY APPEARED IN "USA" MAGAZINE ON WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE. THE ARTICLE HE WAS PLANNING ON USIA WOULD ALSO BE FOR "USA."

3. FORTY-FIVE MINUTE INTERVIEW FOCUSED ON FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

A. DID DIRECTOR PERSONALLY SUPPORT DETENTE?

B. DID USIA OFFICIALS ACCUSTOMED TO COLD WAR RHETORIC STAND IN WAY OF AGENCY SUPPORT FOR ADMINISTRATION POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION?

C. HOW DID USIA RECONCILE VOA BROADCASTS THAT DEAL WITH SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY ON DISSIDENT ISSUE, WITH SOVIET MEDIA'S "RESERVED TREATMENT" OF SUCH DOMESTIC U.S. MATTERS AS WATERGATE?

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D. HOW DID U.S. INFORMATION POLICY VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION
DIFFER WITH INFORMATION POLICY TOWARD PRC?

4. DIRECTOR RESPONDED ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

TO QUESTION 1: HE PERSONALLY STRONGLY SUPPORTS DETENTE AND USIA
AS FOREIGN INFORMATION ARM OF USG REFLECTS ADMINISTRATION POLICY.
TO QUESTION 2: WHILE INDIVIDUALS MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME INITIAL
PERSONAL DIFFICULTY IN MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO NEW POLICY, AGENCY
OFFICERS ARE CAREER PROFESSIONALS WHOSE JOB IT IS TO SUPPORT
ADMINISTRATION POLICY. IT IS THE AMERICAN PRACTICE, THE DIRECTOR
EXPLAINED, TO ARGUE ISSUES INTERNALLY, BUT ONCE DECISION IS MADE,
EVERYONE SUPPORTS IT.

TO QUESTION 3: THERE IS, OF COURSE, A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE
IN THE SOVIET AND AMERICAN APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA, AND WE EVEN
HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE BASIC QUESTION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES
NEWS. THE VOA DOES AND, INDEED, SHOULD REPORT IN ITS NEWS
BROADCASTS AND EDITORIAL ROUNDUPS THE MULTITUDE OF OPINIONS
REFLECTED IN THE MEDIA AND THE STATEMENTS OF VARIOUS PERSONALITIES.
VOA DOES NOT ORIGINATE COMMENTARY ON THE DISSIDENT ISSUE.

NOT TO SAY WHAT THE U.S. PRESS IS REPORTING ON THE QUESTION
HOWEVER, WOULD BE SLANTING THE NEWS AND THAT WE CANNOT DO.

TO QUESTION 4: WE MAKE NO DISTINCTION IN INFORMATION POLICY
TOWARD USSR AND THE PRC, ALTHOUGH OUR ACTIVITIES IN THE SOVIET
UNION ARE, OF COURSE, MORE EXTENSIVE BASED AS THEY ARE ON A LONG
HISTORY OF CULTURAL AND OTHER TYPES OF EXCHANGES.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY REPORTING ANY MENTION OF INTERVIEW AND
TEXTS OF ARTICLES WHICH IT MAY GENERATE. RUSH

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